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QUIZ AND QUILL



Spring 1969

The Quiz and Quill

Published by
THE QUIZ AND QUILL CLUB
of Otterbein College



THE STAFF

Bobbie Stiles Editor-in-Chief

Maggie Tabor Assistant Editor

Spring, 1969

Founded 1919

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1968-1969

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Quiz and Quill Poetry Contest

First Award	Dave Partridge
Second Award	Linda Grznar
Third Award	Robin Rike
Honorable Mention	Terry Schamber

Quiz and Quill Prose Contest

First Award	David Mays
Second Award	George V. Breede
Third Award	Richard P. Klein

Quiz and Quill Humorous Writing Contest

First Award	Dave Partridge
Second Award	Maggie Tabor
Third Award	Bobbie Stiles
First Honorable Mention	Sue Casselman
Second Honorable Mention	Terry Goodman

Quiz and Quill Short Story Contest

First Award	Linda Karl
Second Award	Richard P. Klein
Third Award	George V. Breede
Honorable Mention	Julie Hogue

Roy A. Burkhart Religious Poetry Contest

First Award	Charlene Simmers
Second Award	Bobbie Stiles
Third Award	Paula Kurth

FOREWORD

Fifty years ago this spring the first issue of *Quiz and Quill* appeared. By the thousands of manuscript pages which have accumulated over the years, it is evident that interest in literary creation has not died at Otterbein.

As editor of the *Quiz and Quill* in this golden anniversary year, I would like to dedicate this spring issue of 1969 to every person who has ever contributed to the magazine.

I would also like to thank Maggie Tabor for undertaking, and quite capably completing, the task of editing the Fifty Year Anthology.

Bobbie Stiles

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IN PRAISE OF PAINTED LADIES

First Prize, Quiz and Quill Humorous Writing Contest

green pieces of paper for thou art the key
unlocking the chambers of thy chastity
you fling the doors open providing a place
for the forlorn, the frightened, the deprived, the debased
the wealthy, the weary, the flabby, the gaunt
all pass through your portals fulfilling their wants
stoop shouldered husbands by you are consoled
lusty young stallions enraged with their cold
wives find great satisfaction
in your proud body and its reaction
you stand beside Schweitzer as a humanitarian
loved by children, adults, and octogenarians
so call it not trade, rather say occupation
better yet ART (of pelvic rotation)
hold your head high, the future's secure
for you and your colleagues, all men prefer
you to a wife (in spite of your fees)
you're different from others – you seek to please.

Dave Partridge

THE BLUE DAY

oh, how i wish this day were o'er, tis
sweet to dream and feel the blue of sky
and wind as neath God's perch i tramp in
daily grind and grunt
sour thoughts protrude the solemn haze
within which my mind doth soak
up words and numbers and ideas none of
which i care to leam
oh, but how cool is the day and how
sleepy i am
tis a fair way to blow an A
but what the hay
tis the day of fun and life and living
which must be done
it should be brought out into the light
that all could see and feel the blue of sky
and wind as neath God's perch i tramp in
daily grind and grunt

Colleen Rae Dunston

DEHUMANS

Bodies of sterilized metallics
conveyed along the tongue of black
between inspecting rows.

(America)

Impotent like ourselves,
they are armored suits with organs.
Flashing steel arms and fingers
as lightning down, stamping
approval,

approval,

approval.

(America)

Feet first, sliding into cardboard cells
marked

"SOLD"

to become inspectors on another
tongue of black.

But our bodies will remain,
undimmed by human tears.

Debbie Harsh

Yours! Mine!

The slime and sludge of the universe,
Formless matter in the midst of formless man,
Weighting him, blinding him, destroying him.
PAIN! More enjoyable than intense –
They all laugh at their own ignorance,
The by-product of life, reflections of life lost or never gained.
Life's toxins are within man
Find yourself a toilet.

John D. Adams

STONEHENGE

In mystery some genius discovers a massive observatory,
A heel stone, and evidence of ancestral technology.
We, however, under the civilized layers,
Are fighting unease at monoliths tumbled
And striding their shadows in afternoon sun,
Outspread on a rich green plain, touched
By light, but alien to it. Leaden monsters
Created to predict the dread eclipse
Or to brood on the struggling sacrifice
Reaching from the shade of centuries.

Reason finds an astronomical plan,
But primitive impulse shrinks from the gloom
Of this circle, these gaunt gray bodies.

Maggie Tabor

when all that is flesh is bone

when all that is flesh is bone
and this dead weight of pain
dissolves with flesh to dust
then shall we lie
with heart to mind
and soul to soul
we'll lie until the hungry sea
consumes our dust

Paula Kurth

Today your velour sky rubs
Against the curb and
The tops of bushes are
Overcast.
Sometimes a tall pine can
Brush away part of your sky
And make some blue
For me.
The pine is always green,
You know.

Yellow summer never needs
The grass to smile but
It's free then.
In spring I can't buy
Color.
Your grey fuzzy sky is
Busy washing the pale
Into puddles
For our yellow summertime.

Terry Goodman

"REPLY"

Second Prize, Quiz and Quill Poetry Contest

As we touch, we
Drown in the
Undulations of each others softness.
Life is for loving,
And touching others – gently.
Answering you in the darkness
I whisper –

Yes.

Marna

THE SNIPER

First Prize, Quiz and Quill Prose Contest

Crouching silently in the now deepening shadow of the large, winter gray tree, John stared at the seemingly endless expanse of the valley below him. He knew the unbroken white snow gave only the illusion of a boundless landscape; yet the view was so singularly impressive, he could concentrate on nothing else. But as his arm began to ache from the weight of the rifle, he once again looked toward the small cabin. The setting sun was blinding on the diamondlike snow crystals. He hoped the man would hurry.

The shack was old and ragged. The contrasting perfection of the snow gave the scene an unreal appearance. It was a different world..

A bitter wind disturbed the silence. It was getting colder now.

The only part of his responsibility he resented was the waiting. He thought of it as wasted time. At first he could think but lately his mind only wandered. But it really didn't make any difference.

He heard the tree move in the wind. He noticed it was getting darker.

This assignment was his last. He thought he would travel now. There were many places he could see. There were many places he had seen, but then it had been different. He wanted to walk across the snow and go inside the cabin.

He shifted the weight of his gun to his other arm.

A responsibility is a responsibility and he had done well. He was relatively content and they had taken care of him well. His duty was not always pleasant, but as he waited here in the quiet, he knew that he — well, that sometimes, he had enjoyed it. He wondered if now he would be bored.

The waiting was the worst part.

He turned his attention suddenly to the hill on his right. A small figure was walking quickly through the snow toward the cabin. John immediately became tense. He noticed nothing else. The man's footing was unsure as he tried to hurry down the steep bank. His movements were almost comical.

John ignored the wind as it once more hit his face. He put the rifle to his shoulder. It was now too dark for an easy shot. He squinted through the sight. He could feel his heartbeat.

The man had now reached the cabin. Now John could see him very well. He felt very close to him. He wanted to know nothing else. The world was two people. The man reached for the door.

He slowly squeezed the trigger. There was the long empty pause before the sharp crack. The man did not have time to turn. He was thrown violently against the door of the cabin and slowly dropped to the ground.

John did not move for several moments. Soon he was alone

again, and he again noticed his isolation. He began to stand up. Suddenly he heard a sharp report. As he turned, he felt a sudden sharp pain and saw a brilliant flash of light. Then there was only the fading coolness of the snow.

Several thousand yards behind John, on another hill, a man lowered his rifle. It was now quite dark. He was cold and would be glad to get home. He heard nothing but the wind and felt no pain. He laughed as he thought of all the hills behind him. Then he was surrounded by the snow.

David Mays

WORLD OF THE ROACHES
or
MIGHTIER THAN THE ATOM

Third Prize, Quiz and Quill Humorous Writing Contest

(written upon reading that the cockroach is
not susceptible to death by radioactive fallout.)

Creatures of distinction,
They no longer stink. Shun
We them no more.

We seek them to survive.
We're willing to serve. I've
Made one my friend.

Soon we will have no air;
With him I'm getting nowhere.
To speak I can do little.

He yells "Bombs aweigh!"
There isn't a way
To live after that's done.

I detect his plot
I won't allow it - sploit!
I've killed him with my pencil.

Bobbie Stiles

NATIVITY

The Winter ends, and goes
to meet the river near the dam.
Here the screaming torrent
becomes pregnant with the last snow,
and picks the bones of a
once-green monument to Nature.
She gorges wooden loaves
in a swallow and spews them forth
like so many chaws of tobacco.

Tomorrow it was quiet,
and the liquid seeped
as down a baby's chin, only
continuous over the molded stone lips
to fall in bubbles
on the brown flowing bib.

Charlene Simmers

The snow fell at two this morning
just as I nodded sleepily over a question
lingering within me all day.
Silently I opened the window
and grabbed a handful.
It melted leaving the wet remains in my hand
to cool my aching heart.
You come back to me with the snow
Your quiet manner
Your changing attitude.
When I hold you – you turn cold
and change your love like the seasons –
Wet tears, as you melt away like the snow.
Your season comes in the night – at two –
and melts in the warmth,
changing my life,
making me grow in heart.
Now I know which season produces the most.

Robin Rike

THE SOLACE OF MICHAEL'S ROOM

Honorable Mention, Quiz and Quill Short Story Contest

"Michael loved this boat more than any other toy," Pam recalled as she carefully traced its bright red sides with her dust cloth. "He was so proud the day that he could finally sail it. He and his daddy had spent hours in the basement hammering and sawing. When the boat was finished, bursting with joy, he said, 'Look, Mommy, what I made!'" "

Pam carefully set the small treasure on the shelf above the toy chest. Surveying the room, she noticed the rug. It had once been fluffy, but now it was matted down and almost threadbare. She momentarily considered replacing it but quickly pushed the idea from her mind.

"Hey, Mommy, Daddy's home!" six-year-old Judy shouted as she bounced up to the doorway of Michael's old room.

"Shush, child!" Pam snapped, being abruptly brought back to reality by her daughter's intrusion. She quickly shooed the little girl out of the doorway and carefully shut the door, not noticing the child's smile melt to a straight, set line.

Pam and Judy descended the stairs. After a perfunctory kiss, Pam and Dick greeted each other, their eyes never meeting. Judy eased over to her father and stretched to put her hand into his pocket. At the same time he bent down, swooped her up into his arms, and spun her around in the air, making her giddy with laughter.

"Watcha' got in your pocket, Daddy?" Judy asked.

Dick sat down slowly and pulled the little girl onto his knee. He pulled out some objects and said, "Well, here's my check book, my billfold, a pen..."

"Silly," Judy said as she dived for his bulging coat pocket. Pretending to put up a fight, Dick lightly grabbed the grasping fingers and then released them.

Judy, laughing, pulled out a small bag of candy, while joy raised the corners of her smile even higher.

Pam, who had been standing back observing the scene, broke in, "Judy, don't eat any now. It'll spoil your supper," and then slipped unnoticed into the kitchen.

Supper went quietly that evening, mechanical conversation accompanying the mechanical procedure of eating. Judy began making a castle in her mashed potatoes, not noticing her mother's looks of reprimand. At last growing bored with the game, Judy looked up at her mother and asked, "Can I go out and play?"

"Ask your father."

"Daddy, can I..."

"Yes, of course, dear," Dick said, straightening himself in his chair.

Judy bounded off her chair and shouted, "'scuse me," as the back door slammed shut after her.

Pam reached for the coffee pot and refilled the empty cups. They sat for several minutes in silence.

Finally Dick spoke. "I ran into the real estate man downtown today," he began.

"Oh?" Pam said, but not so much as a question but as a hard, cold monosyllable of rejection of the words she knew would follow, that had followed so many times before.

"He said we could have the old Wilson home for the price we wanted," Dick said.

"Of course you told him we weren't interested."

"No, I didn't," Dick paused and added another spoonful of sugar to his coffee. He brought the cup to his lips, and finding it too hot, returned it to the saucer. He picked up his spoon and continued stirring.

"What did you say then?" Pam asked, not raising her eyes above her own coffee cup.

"I told him we'd move in as soon as we could find a buyer for this house."

"A buyer for our home? Michael's home?" She looked at her husband for a response to her question, but he continued stirring his coffee, the color in his neck rising only a shade. "But, of course, that never mattered to you," she commented, returning her gaze to her coffee cup.

"Michael has been dead for over two years. Judy is still alive. I am still alive."

"You wouldn't talk like that if you were a mother. You take no more notice of your son now that he's gone," Pam said, choking on the last word.

"But I did notice him when he was..." Dick stopped suddenly, checking his sentence but not soon enough.

"Alive?" Pam asked, finished his sentence. "But how could anyone love her son more than I? I've certainly grieved his loss more than you have."

"I loved my son," Dick said. Rising from his chair, he walked slowly to the front door, opened it, and walked out.

Pam sat motionless for a minute. Then suddenly she jumped up and ran to the steps. She caught herself on the banister as she tripped on Judy's golden-haired doll that had been left lying on the steps.

"Careless little thing," Pam muttered through her tears.

She reached the solace of Michael's room and collapsed on his bed, "Oh, Michael, I love you now. Please come back!"

An hour later the door bell rang, waking Pam from a heavy sleep. She dried her eyes and went down the steps again slowly. When she opened the door, she found a neighbor, her face white, standing there with a policeman.

"Pam," she said, "there's been an accident...Judy ran out in front of a car..."

* * *

A week after the funeral Pam sat in Judy's room. She picked up the golden-haired doll. Lovingly she ran her fingers through its hair and said, "Judy loved this doll more than any other toy."

Julie Hogue

EXASPERATION

(The world situation:)
It's pretty bad in this day and age
When madmen in their fits of rage
Make threats to push the button,
And where governments are so complex
That lagging economies fall in wrecks
Upon organization's sea.
(Despairing, our motto:)
"Time's running out for the world!" we cry.
"Let's rocket our problems to the sky;
Perhaps the solution's there."
(The United States:)
"We're a country rich," they say, "and great."
While our people's hearts are filled with hate
For one thing or another;
And most, rightly, are afraid to laugh –
For others, though unworthy chaff,
May turn their heads and scoff.
(Enlightened our slogan:)
"White is white and black is black?"
Oh! Equality's remained too slack!
Perhaps the solution's there.
(But, being human:)
At our tension-filled posts we stand each day –
While around us thieves and rapists slay
In throes of malice and greed.
Yet, a few wiser sentries are looking above,
Hear the rumbling of another flood,
And are presently building an ark.

Jacqueline Poe

Must these stars so cruelly stare
In arrogance as I contort my neck
And gaze at them? At first their frost
Involves my soul in grandeur, arrests
My admiration and draws my body
As the sun enthralls green shoots. The scan
Of black and spark is velvet and throb
Of stabbing steel. The gentle ceiling
Is not. The plush of dark is deep
Indeed, and the fires that pulse like "gems
At a jeweller's" can never be set. No surface
Can bear them. Night and stars go on
Forever, reaching mind and thrusting
Thought to grasp an edge where there is
No edge. The brain wrinkles and warps
In search, casts through glaring gloom
And yanks back on itself with a snap,
Fleeing the sneer of stars,
And the chill of eternity's chuckle.

Maggie Tabor

SENSATION

I tasted the swing,
And sensing high, I smelled the setting sun.
I heard the lilacs singing on the hill,
And felt the pine leaves' breath upon my brow;
And I knew that birds were flying
To the tower in the town.

I tasted the swing
And since I could not see,
I felt the landscape touch my eyes.
I heard the wind lift me higher unto God
Then set me gently down upon the ground
Where lilacs felt my sighs.

Charlene Simmers

We were so strong that we rode on summer's spell,
Instead of its catching us.

We drifted into fall and became diluted.
Did I really do that?

During the winter we reached out again.
But my heart had longer arms than your mind.
You remained you and I could not become Us alone.
Perhaps even you didn't know you were lying.

Oh, I forgive you, but how can I live with just me?
And, can I meet spring face to face?

Beth Le Sueur

Second Prize, Burkhart Religious Poetry Contest

After pilgrims' feet have raped the land,
Unseen, unremembered, come the planned
Executioners who build the town
And tear the pilgrims' altars down.

Centuries crawl along on bloody stumps
That care not why or where, with humps
And clods of ground turned over. Only how
Mattered then, but who matters now.

Bobbie Stiles

TWO IMPORTANT THINGS

A flag is a flag
A tree is a tree
Without either one
Where would we be

Without the flag
We wouldn't be free
Without the tree
We wouldn't have paper

James R. Fox

I

You – the deepening dusk of black winter –
Bringing white, gray, blustering storms. Raging
Rivers stopped icy by foul breath. After
Killing, driving, watching others retch, you stand smiling.

Before you flee beasts, men, stars of dreams
Dreamed not in bed, but standing on the naked plains
Blasted. Torn life! Tears that stream
Carnage! Your delight – the stark, blighted remains.

Yet standing beside you, your frigid breath warms me
And steals the shivers from my bleached white skin.
Little, less hope to make you of me –
Frigidity triumphs, surviving in sin.

My gangrened fingers can let your hair down
But my will screaming soundless is the voice of a clown.

II

When cold falls, and the warmth of springtime
Flows softly through valleys, catching the leaves
of March between gentle teeth, you blossom
As the apple bud on stark frozen trees.

Falling in a heavy mist, you shower
The earth with fertile tears of remembrance.
With winter past, love's arrived at its hour:
In fields of soft mud, you lead the may dance.

I can't help but love you, decked in the splendor
Of green. Lush and rich as a low-lying pasture,
Sung to by thrushes, your previous furor
Lies sleeping in innocence, steeped in grandeur.

In my heart you've built a pure, white tower,
Then led me forth to your soft green bower.

III

Hot blasts, summer, shrivels. Glaring tears
Of passion, dried seared on heat-salty cheeks,
Trails of consumed, wanton sweat, blinding fears
Of passion, boiled in flesh, bled till it was weak.

Storms ravaging ruined carcasses, and charred
Lightning stabbing deep my bleached skeleton.
Rains drench life through every crevice scarred;
Filling, flooding, drowning, boiling, searing again.

Passionate dreams, you, of rutting, filthy beasts –
But I fall victim to blazing obscenity
And pant to possess this, your very least.
Dreams burn in your insincerity.

Blood drips, smolders, in veins nearly severed
I have no thoughts of what I once revered.

IV

Autumn winds, warm at first, soon become chill.
Golden leaves, once the hope of spring, mellow
In ripeness, sail in the wind, and then lie still.
Red passions of love turn vibrant yellows.

The softness of spring returns with the loss
Of summer's garish glow; but winter's claim
Of bleakness and death will finally toss
Life aside. Beginning and end are the same.

Yet deep in this twilight a warm glow still shines.
The darkening gloom is lit by the past
As a glimmer deep in a glass of good wine.
My love, through fire and ice, is still fast.

Though autumn leaves must fall to the earth,
They are richer now dead, than in the softness of birth.

Brian Bates

MOVE ON

Honorable Mention, Quiz and Quill Humorous Writing Contest

Move on.
Don't reach to me for help.
I want none of you.
I would have cared once – long ago;
Now I'm like the rest,
Well armored against you and your kind
By the onyx heart and alabaster mind
Hard, cold, reflecting all that I meet,
Absorbing none.
Move on, my would-be parasite
Look for the very young or the very old –
The unformed or the shattered –
And someday, look for the fragment of white stone
As I join yesterday's men.
We'll talk then.
Move on.

Sue Casselman

CAESAR'S WORD

Second Prize, Quiz and Quill Prose Contest

"Julius Caesar is easily one of the most distinguished Romans alive today. Perhaps he will be the most famous of the Romans, no one can tell. He opposed Emperor Sulla, and escaped death only because his vast array of friends, a tribute to his character, pleaded with the Emperor to spare him. He gathered the Populist party to him despite the fact that he himself was a noble. When Sulla died, Caesar took up with his successor, Pompey, and formed a political alliance. To show that Caesar still had great visions for himself, he helped Pompey gain command of the Roman armies in the Asian continent. With Pompey safely occupied, Caesar set out to gather the people behind him. He advanced his cause by giving luxurious gladiatorial games for the peoples' entertainment. Much of the money for this came from the banker, Crassus. When Pompey came back from Asia, these three set up a triumverate, and became masters of Rome. And now, Pompey is off to Spain, Crassus to Asia, and Caesar to Gaul. What will come of this? A great deal may. Pompey will rest in Spain, already subdued by Caesar, and will enjoy the climate. Crassus, in Asia, is only a banker, and will try to advance his own holdings. Caesar goes to Gaul, where the warring tribesmen will sharpen himself and his army. If he returns, he will be full of new military knowledge, battlehardened. Pompey will be fat and lazy. Crassus will be richer. Caesar could conceivably defeat Pompey in battle if it comes to that. But it is best to wait developments and not theorize."

Caius Lucan put down the stylus, and gazed out over the garden. He well knew that what he had written was treason, and he would be banished if he were caught. But he believed the things he had written to be true, and wished he had some way of going to Gaul with Caesar. Since his family had moved next to Caesar, Caius had followed him about, like a small dog, doting on his every word. Caius would like nothing better than to accompany Caesar to Gaul, and afterward, be in on the spoils he was certain Caesar would receive if he were named Emperor. It was a very big "if", but Caius had firm convictions. He had crossed to the hearth and dropped the roll of papyrus into the flames. He would seek Caesar out, and convince him to take Caius along.

"Hold, Citizen. Where are you going?"

Caius had gotten within ten feet of Caesar when the guard's spear barred his way. He knew it would happen sooner or later. It would prove his worth to Caesar if he could circumvent this guard.

"I am Caius Marcus Lucan, son of Quintus Lucius Lucan, member of the Senate, I am known to Caesar. I advise you to let me pass, a word from my father, and you would find yourself on the frontier."

The two young men locked eyes and widened their stance, preparing for a long argument.

"If the words of Quintus Lucan are so powerful, they should be able to wrangle a meeting in Caesar's home, so you would not bother him on busy days just before leaving for Gaul. Besides, I will be on the frontier soon enough."

"Well said, both of you." They turned and saw Caesar regarding them through approving eyes. "Paulus, you will assume the command of the guard over me. Never leave my side except by my order. Such a level-headed and quick-witted man should be recognized. And you Caius, welcome. Tell me of your reason for seeking me out."

George V. Breede

AWAKENING

Honorable Mention, Quiz and Quill Poetry Contest

I held your life in my arms
as I gently cage a goldfish
in the scoop of my fingers,
to grin at its squirm and tickle,
as I hold a lamb against me
and feel its baby's heart pound
and its ribs rise with
each sucking of breath.
I wanted your life, your warmth
to comfort me, calm me;
but your gentle hands
awaken me.
A tightly wound watchspring
within me hums, expands.
I have love, passion
to give, to share.
Your desire is matched
by my own reaching out,
my own demanding.

Terry Schamber

SHARON-MARIE

down the occult stairway crying
of the lover she has lost
out to unknown worlds of freedom
wondering who will bear the cross

tears but not the tears of wind
she stumbles blind, spasmodic gasps
echo in the empty night
she cannot say his name or clasp

the sky unto her throbbing breast
she starts to turn but every fire
only offers warm illusions
sometimes comfort, never rest

if she could only love him
if he could love her in return
it's not asking much to feel
one soft kiss, one strong arm

around her waist to protect her
from the world's demented minds
but spirits only touch the eyes
of gypsies, drunkards and the blind

and so she walks or tries to walk
away from him and all she's known
to create a living world of life
be it marble, flesh, or chalk

II

alone before a different fire
she sits secure from storms outside
reading Blake and sometimes Byron
always chaos flows inside

her mind, her damned mind, still torments her
Voltaire bloodies Browning's nose
Nietzsche gouges Plato's eyes
still, what if he rose

rose? to what? a masochist?
denouncing life, embracing death
no, the necessary hell within
no, only that hell can exist

and answers? answers, there are few
but to simply want to live and die
when life is gone, to let her soul
sing through life as she defies

the fiends that frighten others
mystics, witches, priests – the same
lunacy surrounds these men. men? what
sort of men would ask your life? a game

she cannot play, how could she abide the rules
bow to what she cannot see, pray
and wish instead of searching
for her answers.. no, today there are too many fools

“No let me have the scorpion's sting
for forty days and forty nights
then tell me truly in the desert
if you still have seen such sights”

No one answer's she's alone
the wind is still. Her rebuke
has silenced every angry god
Peter? Mary? John? Paul? Luke?

Answer her, why are you silent
will no one rise to his defense
lives he long as noble Hector
life and death but half so violent

Dave Partridge

(untitled)

jeer at me, snarl-twisted
kick at me, bovine-sluggish
spit on me, yellow-minded
dung on me, mule

my parents were love people,
lives hot-custard rich
and I am their bastard world child.

Terry Schamber

Honorable Mention, Quiz and Quill Humorous Writing Contest

the crunchy white is
good to
crawl between
if the soft pushes
back from my pillow.
with feet so far from me
their tired f

a
l
l
s

a
w
a
y

and
my mind is
not covered,
just cushioned.

the smooth feels right,
now.
too soon will rumpled
morning come after
warm and cold
wrinkle together around
me.

then i have to smooth
the white at dawn
again to make my
"hiding place"
for the dark.

Terry Goodman

Today
has been one of those
brand-new, daisy-fresh
days

In which
mere existence has piled
wonderfulness
upon
wonderfulness

Shirley Scott

THE TREES

First Prize, Quiz and Quill Short Story Contest

Under the blue eternal sky stood the ancient green hills, and between them reclined the ancient misty valley. Through this valley wandered an old, old river, and along its banks stood several small villages, the grey mossy stonework beginning to crumble with age.

The few villagers all lived just as their fathers and their fathers' fathers lived many years ago. The good housewives arose at dawn and stirred the embers into flame. The men would go out and milk the spotted cow, and the children would go to school. So life went on week after week and year after year in these villages along the lazy river. Bread would be baked, butter churned. The sheep would be sheared, and the cow would give birth to a wobbly-legged calf. Children played with handcarved tops and rag dolls. Lovers walked along the river, hand in hand, and the old men smoke their pipes in the village square.

But one village was different. Yes, one village had something that no other village had. Trees! Oh, of course every village had its scattering of trees, and the river had its willows, but this one village was different. It had a border of twenty-four sturdy oak trees all the way around the village square.

Even this would not be astonishing if not for the age of these trees. By the craggy bark and gnarled branches, the villagers knew they must be very old, but no one alive could remember when they were planted. The oldest villager said that his grandfather had told him that the trees had been there when *his* grandfather had been a child. The town records dating back to 1548 made no mention of the planting of the trees. Many stories were told, though, about their origin. Some said that the spot had been the garden of a Saxon castle that had long since disappeared. Others went back even further and said it had been a spot sacred to the Druids. Still others among the children said that it was a spot bewitched by Merlin. But no one really knew.

Occasionally a magazine or newspaper reporter would come by, enquiring about the trees, and the summer months usually brought a few tourists to the quaint little village. But nothing seemed to break the quiet tranquility until one spring.

The snow had disappeared from the hillsides, and the birds and heather returned to the valley. The trees leafed out, and flowers blossomed along the hedgerows. And the rain pattered down like fairy tears and washed the face of the spring landscape. Then suddenly the oak trees around the square began to lose their leaves. One by one they turned brown, withered, and fell off until all the trees had a definite sick look.

Of course everyone was concerned, especially the mayor, and he called together an emergency council meeting to "save our trees." All the important citizens came – the butcher, and the

baker, the tailor, the cobbler, the blacksmith, and the buggy maker all put down their tools and took off their soiled aprons and came to the meeting. The schoolmaster even dismissed school for the day so that he could go. This was IMPORTANT!

The mayor stemly rapped his gavel on the table, his rusty mustache bobbing all the while.

"I hereby call this emergency meeting to order," he stated gruffly. "Something is wrong with our trees!"

"Hear! Hear!" everyone shouted.

"What shall we do?" the mayor asked.

The tailor stood and addressed the council. "Esteemed members and Lord Mayor, we all know that our trees are old, ancient even. Why, there're stories that they even date right back to King Arthur! We can't let them die now!"

"Hear! Hear!" everyone shouted.

The tailor continued, "All living things need water. An' big things need more water than little things. It's been a fairly dry spring; so maybe if we water the trees..."

"Hear! Hear!" everyone shouted.

The meeting was adjourned, and the Mayor announced to the waiting villagers, "We will water our trees!"

They all cheered and ran to get buckets. The mayor even poured on the first pailful. All afternoon the villagers ran to and fro from the river to the square with buckets of water for their dear trees. For everyone it was an excuse for a holiday, and for the children it was a chance to get wet. When the ground was nicely soaked, everyone rested and waited for the trees to come to life again.

A week passed. Then two weeks, and still the leaves continued to fall. Another meeting was called.

"I hereby call this emergency meeting to order," the mayor stated, his mustache bobbing. "Something is *still* wrong with our trees!"

"Hear! Hear!" everyone shouted.

"What shall we do?" the mayor again asked.

The butcher stood and addressed the council. "Esteemed members and Lord Mayor, our trees are a landmark. They make our village special. We can't just let them die!"

"Hear! Hear!" everyone shouted.

The butcher continued, "Everything needs food." He patted his ample stomach. "We must feed the trees! Give them fertilizer!"

"Hear! Hear!" everyone shouted, sure that this was the solution.

The meeting was adjourned, and the mayor announced to the waiting villagers, "Give them fertilizer!"

Immediately everyone set to work. Farmers cleaned out their barns and brought loads of manure for the trees. Housewives brought bits of potato peelings and egg shells. Others brought fish to add to the mound around the base of each tree. Then everyone sighed and got cleaned up and waited to see if the trees

would revive this time.

A week passed. Then two weeks, and still the leaves continued to fall. Now the whole square was covered with brown leaves as if it were autumn in June. Another council meeting was called.

The mayor called the meeting to order, his mustache bobbing frantically. "Something is still wrong with our trees! What can we do!?"

The councilmen glanced uneasily at the tailor and butcher whose ideas had failed, and no one wanted to voice another idea which could just as easily fail.

Finally the cobbler stood timidly and said, "I think we have done all we can. We tried. Oh, no! I don't mean we should give up. I mean we should bring in someone who knows a lot about trees. When we're really sick, and our own home medicines don't help, we send for the doctor. Well, we've done all we can do for our trees, and now it's time to call in a tree doctor."

Almost everyone chuckled, for no one had ever heard of such a person as a tree doctor, but no one wanted to hurt the simple cobbler's feelings.

However, the mayor held up his hand for silence, and said, "The cobbler is right. We should send for a tree doctor. There is one in the big city." He knew about such things because he went there each year for the mayor's convention, and one year the tree doctor had spoken before the gathered mayors. He explained this. "And so, I shall write a message and the fastest rider will take it to the big city and bring back the tree doctor for our trees."

"Hear! Hear!" everyone mumbled, not very enthusiastically.

The rider was dispatched, and late that night he returned with the message that the tree doctor would be glad to help save the ancient trees, and he would come as soon as he could.

The whole village tensely awaited the arrival of the doctor, and on the second day he entered the village in a shiny black carriage. Everyone welcomed him gladly and stood about in bunches as he examined the trees. He picked up a brown leaf from the ground and looked at it. He broke off a small branch, and measured the diameter of each trunk and the height of each tree. Then he took a shovel and dug up a little around one tree and closely examined the roots. He felt the soil and put a little in an envelope to examine later.

Then he tipped his hat, packed his tools, said good day and drove off, saying he would be back in a few days. Again the people waited, and the doctor returned as he had promised and brought five other men. They dug deep holes around each tree and even holes out in the square. Then they began chopping and hacking and sawing at the roots as the townspeople stood by gasping. "What are they doing to our trees?" they whispered.

That week work went on as usual in the small village while the workmen chopped at the trees, but occasionally the shopkeepers would peek out to see what was happening, and housewives would pause with their friends on the way to market.

Finally, the holes were filled up, and the doctor said the trees would be fine in a few weeks. He then collected his fee and left with his workmen.

The people waited and waited anxiously all through July, and then it was August, and still the trees showed little improvement. Yes, the leaves had ceased to fall, but perhaps that was just because there were not many leaves left.

Then after a cold spell in September, the weather turned warm and damp and balmy, just like spring. The birds put off their idea of flying south, and a few of the spring flowers even began to bloom again. Then one day as the cobbler was walking home across the square in the gentle rain, he glanced up, and to his surprise, the ancient oak trees were all covered with the light green of new budding leaves!

Immediately he ran to tell the mayor, and they both ran to tell the butcher, and the baker, and the tailor, and the blacksmith, and the buggy maker, and all the rest of the villagers. Soon everyone was in the square, standing in the rain and gazing at their wonderful trees.

"Our trees have been saved!" shouted the mayor. "Three cheers for the cobbler whose idea it was to send for the doctor!"

"Hip hip hooray!" the villagers all shouted, and the cobbler beamed with pride.

Walking back to their cottage, a small boy asked his father, "What was wrong with our trees that made the leaves fall off?"

"Well, son," answered the father, "I guess because the trees are so old and have grown so big that the roots became larger than the part above ground and took all the food. Remember that, my son. Don't let your problems, or anything grow so large so as to starve the rest of you."

The boy just smiled and gripped his father's hand tighter.

Linda Karl

EVOLUTION

The dirge –
Sophronia viewed through the web.
The laborer continued artfully at his window,
His master plan slowly masking the light.
Outside, infinity marched between two strands.
Life is impaled on beliefs –
Love is murdered by hate –
Immortality is swallowed by darkness.
The world struggles from its own coffin,
All were bastards.

John D. Adams

SUBURBIA

Dull, dishwater life,
Once so bright a flame
Now stifled, a few smoldering ashes remaining
Round the same corner to the same house
You make your dilatory way
Existing in twilight.
You cling so tenaciously to your slab of brick.
Your bit of grass.
Silly, silly little life.
Just a bronze chain with gold plate
Slowly chipping away.

Sue Casselman

FRONT PAGE

First Prize, Quiz and Quill Poetry Contest

slits of drunken sunset clouds
dimly light the rotting sky
as the dusky dull dark shroud

drops upon the eyes
a semiconscious swerve a scream
the siren's bitching cries

flashbulbs pop the twilight gleams
precious tokens of the past
banish as the burning dreams

crumble smouldering ash
molten metal fused by chance
explodes in vain to smash

the mocking fires as they dance
somersault then pirouette
to the face now fly the hands

a quivering curse an epithet
the tears that try to fertilize
the sterile womb of death

Dave Partridge

A SHORT SCREAM

Third Prize, Quiz and Quill Prose Contest

The calf couldn't get up. He tried at feeding time, but it looked as though his hind legs wouldn't work. I was told to take it to the vet's office, to make sure it was a physical problem, not disease. Once there I checked in and unloaded it in one of the small pens at the rear of the clinic.

While waiting for the vet to arrive, I wandered around, looking at the pens of sheep and cows, several horses, a bull, a nanny goat with three kids. There was another horse tied outside to a fence by the alley way, a pretty grey mare. I wondered what was wrong with her, and watched with interest as two vets began to examine her.

An alley ran between holding pens, an empty lot, and the back yards of several run-down homes. It was cluttered with garbage cans, telephone poles, old cars, a feather mattress, junk. A little girl was playing amidst this. She galloped up and down the road-way, now and then stopping and patting a make-believe horse on the neck. Loose brown hair blew in the wind with a ribbon as she ran, talking to her horse, telling him to run faster, to jump, to stop. She saw the vets with the gray mare tied to the fence, and also began watching.

One vet was shaking his head, and the other nodded in agreement. The first disappeared into a building, and then returned. I suddenly watched him raise a pistol to the mare's head and shoot. The sound of the shot reverberated and blended with a short scream.

The vet turned and saw the little girl watching as the mare fell, its head oozing blood and brain, its eyes bulging open and empty.

The little girl turned and walked away, mouth open, no longer riding the make-believe horse. She turned to look again, and then disappeared.

Richard P. Klein

WOODS

Deep echoings of loneliness in a vast hollowness
Draws one to the edge and drowns the senses
In a hypnotic desire to penetrate the interiors.
Mystic and compelling the call to submerge in darkness
To the base of pillars supporting the unseeable sky
An everencompassing suppression of the trance and then;
Panic!

Joseph S. Swingle III

ONE CHANCE

Third Prize, Quiz and Quill Short Story Contest

General George Washington looked up from the large map on the table before him and tried to rub the tired feeling from his eyes, but only sleep would do that. He stood and moved to another table and another map.

A long finger came down on Lower Sandusky in the Ohio Country. He had heard snatches of rumors of a British and Indian build-up in that area, but he needed more facts before he accepted the idea; George Rogers Clark had secured the Ohio Country two years before, and Washington did not think it would be threatened so soon.

Still he could not afford even a slight risk of deflating the rising morale of his shoe-string army. After the sadistic beating the Americans got from Gen. Ferguson at King's Mountain, the North Carolina mountainmen were beginning to cut Ferguson to ribbons, and a ray of hope came to the American troops.

To lose the Ohio Country would probably knock the bottom out of the people and the war.

Washington went to his desk and began to write; he called toward an orderly standing at the door and said, "Tell Whitt I'd like to see him."

Whitt strode toward the room in which Washington was waiting, excitement filling him; Washington was the most respected man and commander he knew of, and he was an easy man to take orders from.

As Whitt reached the doorway and looked into the room, Washington folded a piece of paper and sealed it with wax. "Come in, Whitt."

Washington shook Whitt's hand as he came into the room. "I want you to take this letter to General Brodford at Ft. Pitt. I want it there as soon as possible, but *GET IT THERE*. That's all. God speed."

Whitt saluted and turned to the door. As he reached the threshold, he started to run.

Whitt had gotten to Ft. Pitt without too much trouble; he had met only a few Indians, and had been able to avoid them.

Now Whitt stood before Gen. Brodford, who was reading the letter from Washington.

Gen. Brodford looked up, "That's all, Whitt. Take a rest before you start back." Whitt left.

"Lieutenant?"

"Sir?" The young officer was at his side instantly, as all young officers are around generals.

"General Washington wants the rumors of an Indian-British build-up around Lower Sandusky looked at. Unfold that map on the table."

As the map crinkled and cracked as the lieutenant smoothed it out on the desk, Gen. Brodford looked out of his window at the men outside going about different tasks in the fort. Try as he might, he could not think of any officer he would send over the official boundary of the struggling nation.

Out in the compound, the general's eyes followed a man who walked with a spring in his step that was used to forest tramping. Not wearing a uniform, he was decked out in buckskins stained to the shade of deepening twilight in the woods.

The man himself was rather short and squat, but built like a powerful wrestler. Even in these days when a man had to be tough to survive, this man was like stone; the broad shoulders on the short frame were reminiscent of an ox humped over, pulling a wagon; the legs were live oak trees, stalky, tough, hard.

"Fold up that map, Lieutenant, I'll send Brady."

"Captain Brady, sir?" The voice was incredulous.

"Yes, why not?"

"Begging your pardon, sir, but Captain Brady is an Indian-hater. He would rather kill them than eat. Surely you have heard of how he swore to avenge the murder of his parents committed by Indians when he was a small child! The man simply couldn't restrain himself on a secret mission. He'd raise too big a stink killing all the Indians he could."

"That's enough, Lieutenant! In the first place, Captain Brady is an officer. As such, he will obey orders. As an Indian-hater (as I am aware he is) he, least of all would allow the savages to prevent him from completing his mission and returning. As you know, he would have no qualms over killing a few Indians to get back. Brady's experience in that area is extensive. There's even a lake named for him on the Cuyahoga River. Lower Sandusky is only a day's travel beyond. I'm sure he is familiar with the area."

"Fold up that map and tell him to come in here, please."

" 'Captain Brady,' he says! 'Select as many men as you will need to scout the Lower Sandusky area secretly and start as soon as possible.' Then he wrinkles his fine nose and says, 'And please take a bath!' Damn Army officers! Sometimes I wonder what I'm doing here myself."

"Take a bath! First time I begin to smell like a decent human being, I'll have 8-10 Indians sharing my scalp!"

Brady bounced over the ground in the compound and then burst into Whitt's presence.

"Damn it Whitt! I need a level-headed fella to go scouting with me around Lower Sandusky. I'm leaving now — you want to go?"

Whitt swung himself off the bunk where he had been sleeping, picked up his fur cap and musket. "Let's go."

Brady and Whitt lay in the dead of night on the top of a gorge looking down at the ground some forty or fifty feet below them, both breathing through open mouths to leave no sound for Indian ears. Below them was a group of some two dozen Indians clustered around a fire, obviously waiting for something.

Seemingly, there once had been a river at the bottom of the gorge, but it had long since dried up and scrub trees and bushes had now taken hold. The Indians around the fire sat or lay on the ground. There was little talk.

There was even less talk on top of the cliff; no word had passed between Brady and Whitt since a day ago when they had crawled to the edge of the gorge among the weeds and shrubs that lined the top and hid them from view. No water, no food had passed their lips since that time.

Brady felt a nudge on his boot and slowly turned his head to look at Whitt who inclined his head to the right; Brady saw horses coming through the trees to the fire.

There was a flurry of activity from the Indians below until the identity of the riders was determined. Brady and Whitt turned to each other as the red-coat of a British uniform stepped into the circle of firelight.

The last thing Brady remembered was a series of brilliant lights popping into view at the base of his skull; now he felt both of his arms close to dislocation and the intense pain that goes with it. Recovering consciousness fully, he found his hands tied behind his back by a piece of rawhide that wound around his neck, so tight that his elbows almost met over the small of his back and he could breathe only with the greatest difficulty and pain.

Suddenly the rawhide parted and his face was pushed into the forest floor while he felt, through numb hands, someone re-tying him so that the rope no longer constricted his neck and each hand grasped the other by the elbow.

Then he was jerked roughly to his feet and pushed toward a vague trail among the trees. He stumbled along the trail, not looking back; he would only see Indians. He would not give the savages the satisfaction of thinking he was in pain. His arms dead from pain and lack of circulation, only the animal in him kept him from screaming out.

Half a day's stumbling to the north had taught Brady several things, the most important of which was that the rawhide he was tied with was frayed; he did not know if he had frayed it, or what, but he could feel it give each time he pulled at it. He also knew that none of the three Indians with him carried guns, only bows and arrows.

The Indians stopped, and one went to the west, one to the north. The other sat on his haunches facing Brady kindling a fire.

Brady was sure now that the rawhide rope would part if he

once gave all his strength to it; he was also sure that the two Indians who had gone west and north had gone to gather in scouting parties to this place. Brady had no illusions of what treatment he would receive when they returned.

The various sounds of the forest made their way to Brady's ears; bird calls, squirrels chattering; now and then a rustle of leaves in the trees as a breeze stirred. The fire the Indian was building had begun to smoke, and now a small flame quivered as the Indian looked from side to side for small twigs to feed it. He reached for one almost directly behind him.

Almost at the same instant, a call came from the forest that might have been a mockingbird except for the variance from one note to another that a mockingbird can never catch. Even Brady realized the peculiarity and he saw the Indian raise his head to answer the call.

The breath he drew never reached his lips.

Brady's shoulders knotted and strained; the frayed cord parted and Brady's knee came down in the Indian's back; hands gripped under the chin — Brady heaved up and heard the sharp crack of bone breaking.

The Indians who returned to the fire found their companion on the ground, his head tilted crazily. Only because they were Indians could they tell that Brady's long strides loped toward the East and the Cuyahoga River, the boundary of the United States.

Brady no longer lived and breathed. He ran and gasped. The stitch in his side developed into steel bands around his chest; his mouth was so dry his breath rasped and he could not swallow. When he stopped he would spit blood, but he did not stop. Sometimes he would hear Indians behind him; when he did not hear them, he imagined he did.

Night came and still Brady ran. He could barely see trees ahead of him but he could not see the ground and the brush and vines that waited to trip him. Several falls had shaken Brady and he dimly knew that the next one might disable him. Sometime during the night he began to run on his heels; the only way to run without being tripped by the brush.

Brady dimly saw dawn break to the east ahead of him. He no longer ran; he stumbled. As he moved he looked at ravines and thickets, thinking to hide in them and rest. But he passed them all, knowing if he chose wrong, he would never choose again.

Once, on a hill, he looked back and saw a line of moving trees a half-mile behind him and a mile across. Then he knew he had to keep going.

Brady began to come to landmarks he knew; nearing the Cuyahoga River. As he ran, he began to think; and as he thought, he began to lose hope. He knew that the river where he would come out would be some 25 feet across — and at the bottom of a 30 foot gorge; there was a shallows down river where he could cross, but he knew there would be Indians there even if they had

not heard of his escape. A little above where he could come out of the trees, there was a pillar of rock in the middle of the river; he might be able to jump to that and then across, if the Indians hadn't thought of it.

The sun rose higher and higher and Brady stumbled on. Once he stopped to tie strips of bark around his frayed moccasins.

It was almost dusk when Brady broke through the line of trees.

He stopped for a moment. Seconds passed. A war-cry cracked in his ears and he saw the waiting Indians at the shallows begin running toward him.

Turning upstream, his heart died as he saw two Indians on the rock island in the river — with more running toward him.

Quick as thought, he ran straight for the river, the yells increased as the Indians were sure they had him. Lungs and bruised feet forgotten; his foot hit the edge of the gorge and his leg gave all its strength to propelling him across the gap. The Indians behind him stopped and stared.

He went farther and farther out; and then he began to drop; then more quickly.

One of the Indians raised a musket; following the dropping target, waiting for it to stop for a split second.

Brady struck the other bank some five feet below the edge; scrambling and clawing, he made his way up the edge as the musket cracked.

Dragging one leg now, Brady fell over the lip of the gorge into the trees.

Now the Indians began to awake from their trance and race toward the shallows to pursue Brady. None would attempt to duplicate his leap across the river.

When they reached the place where Brady had crossed, they found trampled bushes and a trail of blood leading northeast. They followed the trail some two miles before it ended in Brady's Lake at the foot of an old floating chestnut tree. The Indians searched all around the lake, some went out on the old tree in the water. None could find a trace of Captain Brady.

Dark came and the Indians gave up. A thin crescent moon rose in the east before a dark, dripping figure limped out of the water among the limbs of the chestnut tree and collapsed on the bank.

George V. Breede

A NIGHT VIEW, THE VERAZANNO-NARROWS BRIDGE

A concrete and steel ribbon
Spanning the Narrows
Between Brooklyn and Staten Island,
Thrusting great fingers into the sky,
Offering the Gift of glimmering strands
Of pearls
To the gods.

Gregory Prowell

Thirty-Seven

RUNNYMEDE

Third Prize, Quiz and Quill Poetry Contest

Runnymede was silent last Sunday,
as my footsteps echoed on the brick road.
I was alone for a few hours –
alone with my thoughts of you.
The fall colors – red, yellow, orange –
Blended together in the autumn sky,
Blended together like you and I,
yet contrasted against the heavens.
God made us for one
Yet my thoughts create us alone.
I can't forget my solitary years
and empty roads I walked in silence;
The nights I spent in tearful prayer;
The shadowless days when the sun hid
himself from me;
The rainy days when puddles mirrored my face alone.
It's hard to get used to another hand
when I've needed strength.
So hard to see through another pair of eyes identically.
But it's so wonderful to find mirror-emotions,
To swell inside, and paint rainbows in the sky,
To hear an echoing step – not in silence –
But in resounding love.
Runnymede was silent last Sunday,
As I was alone for a few hours
But only in my thoughts –
My love echoed a second step,
A syncopated heart beat,
Blended together like you and I.
Autumn's only one season.
We've got forever.

Robin Rike

MUD

First Prize, Burkhart Religious Poetry Contest

A piece of mud molded,
And shaped by a Child's hand
Into His impression of himself,
A hallowed piece of earth from sacred land;

A ball of clay chosen
And lifted to a new name,
For its beauty, for its ugliness,
For to the Child the two are both the same.

Charlene Simmers

-1-

Flames burst into a quiet night
Red, white, blue
Saddened faces watch as a dream burns
Ashes of a once regal cloth

Flames burst into a quiet night
Death has caused them
Death is their result
Saddened faces watch the screen
And curse as people die

For dreams lie hopefully in a meaningless rag
As people die unimportantly, searching for truth
In dreams

-2-

Huddled masses yearning to breathe free
Held back by simple force
Death is a funny thing
But so is life

-3-

Somewhere between time and space
Suspended by the string of reason
Amid the beauty of sorrow
Sadness, hope, love, hate, peace

Where there is reason
There is no peace

Darryl Bojanowsky

PRAYER

Third Prize, Burkhart Religious Poetry Contest

Music echoes and finally fades;
Silence is a separate pain.
The wind is calm, the thunder's still:
All I can hear is the rain.
The light grows dim
Yet faith remains
In the comforting voice of him.

Paula Kurth

A PURCHASE OF ASPEN LEAVES

Second Prize, Quiz and Quill Short Story Contest

I

What had begun badly, was ending worse. Though the snow had ceased before noon, a wind now gusted out of the south west, consistently stronger with each hour. At dusk the two riders found themselves leaning into it to remain balanced in the saddle. They had hoped to reach protection from the wind at Smith and Otter creek draw, but darkness found them miles from their destination, in the open and exposed.

They stopped, dismounted, and left the horses to graze upon the sparse grasses not yet buried by the snow. Numbly they forced their jaws to chew the deer meat and dried fruit. There was nothing to build a fire with, though had there been, they were too cold and tired to try. They crawled into heavy bedrolls and sought sleep, but the cold and wind kept them awake. The horses hobbled near by, one tied lightly to a bed roll, stamped at the frozen ground as if in contempt. They too were cold.

Fenton lay there trying to keep his ground tarp from blowing off the bedroll; as soon as he'd tuck one corner in, another would begin flapping. Snow melting off his boots within proved that he must still be generating some body heat. Thought came and left quickly, dreams of treasured possessions, warmth, food, a girl... of someday when he'd know what he really wanted. He wondered if he'd appreciate it more because of the last two days. He figured he probably would.

The motionless form beside him was Buck, a best friend, a teacher. They'd been riding together for three years now. Through a crack in the covers Buck was staring at the horizon, watching for shooting stars. He wondered whether or not his horse would be able to carry him in the morning. Arabs were tough critters, and probably would. And Fenton's old yellow horse...he'd been around too long to quit now.

The wind kept blowing snow and dust into the split in his covers. He knew he was too cold, that they'd been foolish to try and ride home from the rim. Should have just turned the critters loose and waited for the snow plows. What a blizzard. He wondered if the pick-up was all right, if the drifted in highway had been plowed out yet, and how mad the foreman was going to be. He sure hoped the owner, Mr. Scheider, didn't find out. What had they wanted to go to that fool cutting horse championship in Denver for anyhow?

Of course they'd been foolish before and lived. Like the night they'd run a few hundred of Knoll's sheep over a cliff, and discovered that some sheepherders stay sober enough at night to almost shoot. Fenton still had a bullet-graze scar on his forearm to prove it. He'd told everyone it was a rope burn, and would then proceed to relate how he tied on to a bull with his Angus up, and

got dragged a quarter mile before the bull got tired of his language. They'd done a lot of foolish things like that.

Buck wondered if Fenton was serious about getting civilized for a while and working for that ranch supply company. His talking about working in town scared Buck. He couldn't see the big red headed cowboy handing out nuts and bolts to some irrigator and his tractor. A strong gust sent a chill down his spine, and he curled up a little tighter.

During the night the wind settled, leaving behind a world of bare ground and tightly packed drifts. By early dawn the two riders began again, both cold and stiff in the saddle, thankful that they didn't have to face the wind.

The day was as long as the night had been. They spoke very little, usually concerning directions. By evening they were a few miles from Goose Egg, riding in total darkness. It had begun to cloud over during the afternoon, and at dusk a light snow was falling. The horses slowly realized they were in home ranch territory, and were showing signs of strength that surprised both cowboys.

Through the snow, the lights of Mr. Clay's house greeted them shortly before the barking dogs. Fenton fumbled with the twine that held the gate shut, finally got it open, and then unsaddled and released his yellow quarter horse. Buck's little Arab mare quickly caught up to its flying form, until they both disappeared into the darkness and toward the sound of whinnies, calling and answering.

Tonight they would graze upon bales of hay. Buck smiled as he thought of his mare. She didn't fit among this wild string of quarter horses, morgans, and mixed up cow ponies. He remembered when he'd ridden her the first time, when the sage and cattle were strange and new. Fenton had laughed himself out of the saddle when she jumped at every mean rock and shadow along the way. But she was a good cow pony now, fast and durable.

They closed the gate and lugged the steaming saddles and bedrolls up to the tack room, and went calling on Mr. Clay, the foreman. The door was soon filled with his heavy frame, and the night with his laughter and questions about where the hell they'd been. He hauled them into the kitchen muttering about almost sending out search planes, while Mrs. Clay hastily placed cups of coffee in front of them. Simultaneously they scalded their tongues, and laughed at each other's effort to hold back the habitual cursing. The four day stubble, the wind burnt skin, the weary look mixed with a frozen grin, these things told much of the story.

They recounted their four day ride, the deer Buck had shot three mornings ago, the ground blizzard yesterday, the deep snow in Fawn Creek Canyon, the coyote tracks down Little Red Creek, the eagles above Muddy Mtn., the herds of sheep in Bates Hole, and the new oil wells on top of Shirley Basin. By the time they'd finished the whole story, they were full of hot food and were warm for the first time since they'd left the pick-up. The two combined made sleep an immediate imperative. They filed down

to the bunk house, and with less than the time it takes a horse to roll over and get good and dusty, fell asleep.

II

Fenton remained on the home ranch for about a week, and then hitched a ride into town. He told Buck good-by and not to worry, he was doing the right thing. Fenton had been to college before Buck had met him, but never talked about it. Buck also knew that Fenton had inherited large sums of money, and didn't really have to take that fool job in town. That was something else that he wouldn't talk about.

Winter stretched on a few more months, and Buck spent the time feeding the main herd across the river each morning, and the bulls, horses and weanling calves in the homeplace corrals. The whole remuda of horses had gotten used to being fed regularly, and would trot up to the hay stack every morning about the same time Buck would drive up in the Dodge one ton from across the river.

Fenton's yellar horse was getting accustomed to being left alone. Sometimes he would still walk up to Buck and take a sniff just to make sure it wasn't Fenton.

Buck met him in town once, and they talked until it was time to go back to work. Fenton was working for a ranch equipment distributor, doing paper work and working in the shop. The conversation was strained for lack of common ground. When Buck mentioned the yellow horse, Fenton turned the conversation quickly toward something else. He had bought a car, some new clothes, and was living with friends he knew in town. Buck kept quiet about what he was thinking. It wasn't his life to live. Fenton was still wearing boots though. He hadn't gone all bad.

The home place was taking on a new appearance, as several new board corrals were constructed, and many old fences replaced. Buck was busy helping Mr. Clay with the overhauling of the tractors, hay baler, and mower. They even found time one day to build a new cattle guard out by the highway, and put in two sign posts at the main entrance with left over pipe. They didn't get around to putting up the sign though.

March roared out like a mountain lion, taking with it several new calves. Buck and Mr. Clay had their hands full feeding and watching for cows having trouble calving. By May there were three hundred new faces in the herd, which was on its way up to summer range in the glade between Scott and Mills Mtn.

Buck was mending a windmill in the glade on the first of June. Spring had come a few weeks earlier, and left the aspen leaves shining and shimmering in the sunlight. He was on top of it, putting oil in the gear box, when he noticed a rider on a yellow horse galloping his way. He almost fell off the narrow platform in his haste to get to the ground. That rider sure was wearing a familiar looking hat, and was sitting sort of side-ways as always.

Buck whooped and hollered at him for taking so long getting back from town. Fenton just laughed at all the threats and abuses. The yellow horse was breathing hard.

They worked the rest of the morning together, until the windmill was pumping a good flow of water out of the ground and into the galvanized tank. Buck didn't ask Fenton if he had returned to stay, he was just aware that he had. He did ask why the change of mind, but Fenton replied there had been no change of mind, ever.

They drove the pickup down with the yellow horse trotting behind, talking of the coming summer and things that ought to be done. The glade was rapidly filling in with grass, as the weather had been kind, providing a lot of rain.

Fenton told Buck about all he'd learned, the accounting and bookkeeping systems, depreciation, taxes, cost and revenue accounts. He went on speaking over Buck's head until Buck wasn't listening anymore, rather just thinking....He realized he was happier than he'd been for a long time. Even though he loved the life he led, he'd been lonely. Fenton was different, he needed more than the straight cowboy life. He just couldn't keep from grinning today, that Fenton, no matter how hard he tried.

The bumpy ranch road spilled out onto the highway. After a short spell, they turned at the ranch's main gate. Fenton watched Buck's face as he finally noticed the newly painted sign at the entrance. His wind worn features lighted up with surprise and the eventual understanding that made Fenton's heart feel a sense of relief.

The sign read:

YELLOW ARAB RANCH
Goose Egg, Wyoming

ABERDEEN ANGUS

FENTON LUND, owner

Richard P. Klein

THE RUSH OF LIFE

Rushing along on the meteor of life,
Caught up with the gravity and hurled along,
Drawn down to the earth and inevitable doom,
Gripping with all one's grueling strength
To be not hurled off into the void.
To desert would mean to be consumed
In fire and flame, an immediate flash.
To persist would mean prolonged destruction,
Enduring heat and hell in blinding haste,
But doom and destruction all the same.

Linda Karl

As night narrows around us, we place
Aside our different worlds, forgetting the wars
We fought and lost all day. We've watched the race
Of the sun for the hill, which creates this one world of ours,
As now we race together to the finish. We could
Live by that vow of another time that was
Twice repeated, once remembered, never understood,
That like the puffy promises of insincerity does
Not relate to tonight. You are not of my world
Of books and business, nor I of your vocation.
But our world tonight, as the shadows and we bend
To the will of the wind, and like blown leaves we are hurled
Together, is a time, gone the sun, of our heat's creation,
Resolved, like the sun that we've come to an end.

Bobbie Stiles

HAVE MERCY, DAMN YOU

Second Prize, Quiz and Quill Humorous Writing Contest

I use no names since poetry today is not
The type to burden with words "To Harvey," and never
Has thus been titled a verse in which the female
Of the species praised (or cursed) the man
Who made the spiders tickle her stomach as mice
Turned cartwheels in her brain. And I, who claim
A mind that feeds on logic and hops from fact
To fact with easy concentration, find that
An itch disrupts my flow of thought, and reason's
Gouge is not a cure for spiders and mice.
Is this infection a poison ivy that spreads
When scratched? How can I conquer a prickling body
With a scrambled mind? To hairy hell with Harvey,
And pardon profanity in one who functioned once
In charge of a brain that fails me now at a touch.

Maggie Tabor

